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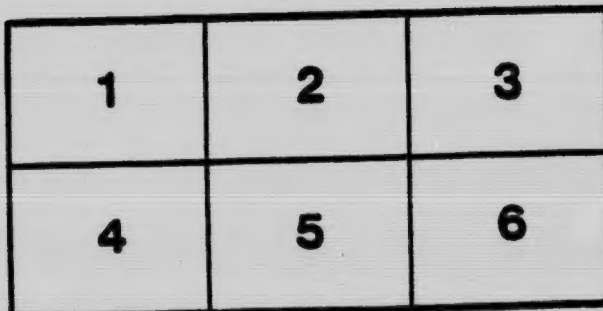
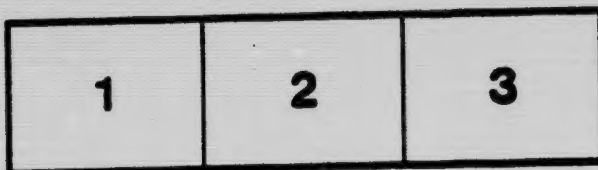
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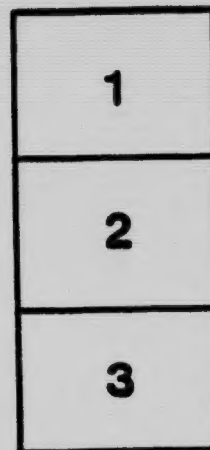
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7

RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF HISTORICAL MATERIALS

7

BY

LAWRENCE J. BURPEE

Reprinted from the Annual Report of the American Historical Association
for 1914, Volume 1, pages 314-328



WASHINGTON
1914

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RESTRICTIONS ON THE USE OF HISTORICAL MATERIALS.

By LAWRENCE J. BURPEE.

At first sight it might seem that the subject we have before us offered little opportunity for profitable discussion; that there could be, at the most, but two points of view—that of the custodian, putting preservation before use, and that of the student, putting use before preservation. If one were inclined to be flippancy, the case might be stated as *Man v. Manuscript*. The more one considers the problem, however, the more angles it presents, and the more involved become the relations of custodian and student to the document, to each other, and to the public. We are to discuss some of the phases of this many-sided question, and as the duty has been put upon me of opening the debate, I shall try to be as brief and judicial as the circumstances will permit.

For our present purposes the definition of historical materials may be confined mainly to manuscript sources, though the question of restriction might also be applied to rare printed books. Our problem, then, is how and to what extent should manuscript material be made accessible to students? It will be seen at once that any consideration of the question, to be satisfactory, must embrace not only restrictions on, but also facilities for, historical research. Broadly speaking, each is complementary to the other.

To get to the bottom of the matter, what is the primary object of archives? The answer to the question depends, no doubt, a good deal upon circumstances. "Preservation of documents," says one authority,¹ "should be the first end to be attained." "It must be borne in mind," says another,² "that to supply historical sources to the investigator is not the principal function, although an important

¹ Charles M. Andrews, *Lessons of the British Archives*, in *American Historical Association. Ann. Rep.*, 1909, 350.

² Waldo G. Leland, *American Archival Problems*, *ibid.*, 347.

one, of archive depositories." One large library¹ lays down the principle that "the manuscript division has been established for purposes of reference and research;" and another² puts it this way: "Manuscripts and manuscript collections should be considered first as to preservation, second as to use. Preservation necessarily precedes use and largely determines and governs it, though it must be borne in mind that a manuscript withheld from consultation might almost as well be nonexistent." In theory at least there is no very serious difference of opinion as to the primary object of archives. In practice, one finds every conceivable variation from the practically total exclusion of the student to an almost reckless freedom of access and circulation. Nevertheless, the extremes of policy are comparatively rare, and there is an increasing tendency to find a mean that will meet all the legitimate needs of research workers without sacrificing the essential safeguarding of the documents.

The following replies from a number of representative institutions in the United States and Canada bear out the above statement:

Connecticut State Library:

We should encourage the use of manuscript material by all competent to use it to advantage for the public good.

Massachusetts State Library:

I think in this age of general knowledge and research the greatest freedom should be given in the use of historical materials in the possession of an historical society or archives bureau.

Pennsylvania State Library:

My invariable rule has been to furnish all the information possible to each student making a request for original material.

Iowa State Library:

A historical society or archives bureau, when supported by the State, should allow fullest liberty to all who have a serious purpose either to copy or to photograph the material in its possession. I can see no justice in depriving any citizen of the State of opportunity to use material collected by the State at the taxpayers' expense.

California State Library:

Our plan in regard to historical material is to permit the freest consultation commensurate with the safety and preservation of the material.

State Historical Society of Wisconsin:

Our past and present policy favors the broadest and freest possible use of our historical materials.

Michigan Historical Commission:

My experience leads to the firm belief that all archives should be made accessible to any student or society either to copy or to photograph.

South Dakota Department of History:

I have conceived that our mission is to give the widest extension to the knowledge and use of the materials of history, and that in consequence everything we have and every service in our power have been at all times placed at the use of the public.

¹ New York Public Library, Rules of the Manuscript Division.

² J. C. Fitzpatrick, Notes on the Care, Cataloguing, Calendaring, and Arranging of Manuscripts (Library of Congress), 1913, p. 5.

Alabama Department of Archives and History:

The practice here has been to allow the most liberal use of our entire collections, either printed or in manuscript.

Historical Society of Pennsylvania:

In my opinion all the United States, State, and other archives should be made accessible to all persons engaged in genuine historical research. Historical societies and public libraries which receive State aid should also come under this class.

Harvard University:

When papers have become historical documents I believe that a library or society should permit the freest use of them to serious-minded students. Their use as historical sources should not, it seems to me, be confined to members of the society that owns them or to students working in that particular library.

Yale University:

It is my policy as librarian to regard myself as custodian of the manuscripts and other treasures in my charge for the benefit of qualified users.

Princeton University:

No restriction should be placed on the liberty of use of manuscripts, save such as provide for the proper preservation of the manuscript itself. All selfishness in the way of reserving things for individuals, for institutions so that they may have the exclusive or prime glory is contrary to the spirit for which institutions are founded and to the essence of the idea of scholarship.

University of Illinois:

Historical material should be open for use and copying so long as the original is not damaged.

Toronto University:

Our principle is to allow the freest possible use of historical material consistent with its safeguarding.

McGill University, Montreal:

Libraries, societies, archives, etc., should regard the books, records, and manuscripts which they possess in the light of a trust which they hold not for their own use or benefit, not alone for the use or convenience of their own immediate constituents, but for the benefit of all persons who are qualified to use them with advantage to themselves or to the world at large. On the other hand, the institutions, being trustees, must take all reasonable precautions against damage to or loss of the property they hold in trust.

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario:

I feel very strongly that historical societies and bureaus of archives should as freely as possible allow other institutions to make copies of the materials in their possession. The materials exist for the use of historians, and the more widely they are made use of the better.

New York Public Library:

I agree with Mr. J. C. Fitzpatrick that "Manuscripts and manuscript collections should be considered first as to preservation, second as to use." This is the kernel of the whole matter, whether applied to manuscripts or rare and costly printed works. This principle carries with it respect for to-day, to-morrow, and generations yet to be. It does not deprive the present-day investigator of any legitimate use, and it also preserves the originals with a pious regard for the rights of the scholars of the future.

Chicago Public Library:

We believe in the widest liberty and latitude to students consistent with the safeguarding of the materials consulted.

Newberry Library, Chicago:

I believe that, in general, historical societies and archives bureaus should be most generous in granting permission to other institutions or to individuals to make copies of the material in their possession.

Having gained some light on the general practice as to the use of historical materials in public institutions, let us go a little more into detail. With a few exceptions, the consensus of opinion is that research workers should have the freest access to and use of historical materials consistent with their preservation. The character of these materials, however, makes imperative some restrictions in their use. Principles of access and circulation that are justifiable and praiseworthy in the case of books may be more than questionable in the use of manuscripts. A book destroyed or damaged may, as a general rule, be replaced. The loss of a manuscript, if no copy exists, is irreparable.

Let me state, then, some of the questions that suggest themselves in connection with the general subject of restriction:

To what extent should an institution possessing valuable historical material allow other institutions or individuals to make copies?

Should such material be loaned for use in another institution, either in the same city or farther afield?

Is it justifiable to refuse access to documents in course of publication, or whose publication has been decided upon, or which may be published by the institution possessing the documents, or by some individual acting under its authority?

Should the use of public documents be refused on or before a certain date, or of private documents of a confidential nature?

What restrictions should be placed upon the liberty of students desiring to consult manuscript or other material?

Should they be subjected to oversight in making copies or tracings of material?

Should they be required to submit their notes to an attendant?

Should their work be subjected to censorship or should they be left to their own judgment as to the character and extent of their extracts?

What credentials should a research worker be required to submit?

Should there be an age limit?

Is the custodian entitled to know the purpose for which copies are made; is he justified in refusing permission if the proposed use seems trivial or undesirable; and, on the other hand, is he entitled to grant exclusive use of certain material?

Should there be any limitation of the number of manuscripts or volumes used by a student at one time?

What hours should be available for research work?

What facilities should be provided, research rooms, suitable tables, adequate lighting, etc.?

What aids should be available, calendars, indexes, classification, guides, etc.?

Should an archives bureau contain a collection of books of reference for the use of the research worker?

What implements are permissible in the copying of manuscripts or rare books: Pencil, pen and ink, fountain pen, typewriter, or photostat?

Should tracing be permitted, with or without supervision?

Should the institution be equipped with a photostat?

Should one institution permit another to make photostat or other copies of its material, or should it exchange copies of material?

Taking these points in the order mentioned, it may be helpful to bring together a few notes based on the experience of representative men and institutions both in Europe and America. No attempt has been made to get the views of all the principal archivists and librarians of the two continents, but perhaps sufficient information is available to show the drift of opinion based on more or less varied experience.

First as to cooperation with other institutions or individuals. The chief of the Manuscripts Division of the Library of Congress writes:

Complete cooperation between manuscript depositories can only be accomplished by complete confidence; and in order that they may serve the full measure of their usefulness and purpose, they should do unto other depositories as they would have other depositories do unto them. Unless manuscripts have been deposited in this library under restrictions by the donor, the library allows other institutions to take copies for their own use freely. As a concrete instance, however, it may be mentioned that when an institution desired that several copies might be made of a valuable manuscript, in order that it might exchange some of them with other institutions, the library felt constrained to decline to permit its possessions to be converted into merchantable material by another institution. When copies are made for another institution, no restriction is placed upon their use by that other institution.

The Dominion Archivist at Ottawa states that it has been his policy from the beginning to cooperate with the Provincial Archives, and other similar institutions in Canada and elsewhere, by exchanging copies of manuscripts. His only objection is that hitherto the balance of trade has been very much against his own institution. A great deal has gone out, but very little has come in. Individuals are given every possible facility for research in the thoroughly equipped building at Ottawa. The State librarian of Massachusetts says:

We are always glad to have individuals or institutions make copies either by photostat or typewriter or in longhand of rare laws, and the same is true of the manuscripts in the archives department. I feel that all the material we

possess at least is of a public nature, and that we have no right to restrict its use any more than may be positively necessary. *The fact that it is photographed or copied simply gives it larger publicity.*

Let me draw your attention particularly to this last point, which we will come back to later. The superintendent of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin writes:

May I suggest that historical materials properly belong to society, rather than to the institution or the individual who may have a legal title to them. To the extent that the public may properly claim a greater interest in the affairs of institutions than of individuals, it seems to me that the policy of sealing historical materials against the scholarly world is more reprehensible in the case of the former than the latter.

Many of you are no doubt familiar with the very generous policy of cooperation carried out by this society under the direction of the late Dr. Thwaites. It is gratifying to know that his successor possesses the same broad ideals. The Historical Department of Iowa has adopted substantially the same policy as that of the Wisconsin Historical Society. The curator, referring to the accumulation of private papers, makes the following interesting suggestion:

As this sort of material comes out of the repositories of business men, literary men, soldiers, politicians and others, some connected with other Governments and other States, and not connected with Iowa itself, I propose the eventual exchange of such materials so that they will finally find a resting place in the region to which they properly belong.

Prof. C. W. Alvord of the University of Illinois, writes:

The disasters that historical manuscripts have suffered by fire in recent years is a sufficient excuse for reproducing all important manuscripts as many times as possible and scattering them all over the country.

The librarian of Princeton University says:

I believe that in the fullest manner consistent with the means of the library, photostat copies of all important manuscripts in any collection should be made by the library owning the manuscript, when requested by other libraries, and loaned to these libraries, the idea being to form a lending collection of facsimiles of one's own manuscripts. At all events, I believe that the having photostat copies of one's manuscripts made at the expense of other libraries which will keep these copies for use should be encouraged as much as possible as a precaution against the destruction of the originals in any way. The Vatican Library makes, I believe, this the only condition, i. e., that we shall keep the photographic copy that we have made open for free access of scholars.

The associate director of the University of Chicago, in commending the same principle of cooperation, says:

I should like to see American libraries and institutions show the same generosity in this respect as some of the foreign institutions, notably the German.

The librarian of McGill University says:

Material should be lent as a rule not to individuals but to other institutions for use by individuals. The lender may reasonably stipulate that the material lent shall only be used within the walls of the borrowing institution. In the case of very rare materials a photostat or cameragraph reproduction might reasonably be substituted for the original.

The only stipulation suggested in allowing other institutions the privilege of obtaining facsimile or other copies of material for their own archives or for the use of students, is that copies from the copy should not be made without permission from the institution possessing the original, and that authors using or citing a copied document should mention the original institution. The librarian of the University of Toronto writes:

We send our material freely for the use of bona fide students and scholars, but always to some responsible institution, such as a library, under whose superintendence the reader consults the book or manuscript. The risk of loss in transit can not be overcome, and in common with other libraries in the United States and Canada we take that risk.

The chief of the division of American history in the New York Public Library writes:

Closer cooperation between historical societies and other similar institutions in photostat or transcript interchanges of material would remove some of the difficulties that now stand in the way of historical research. I think it desirable that this question should be treated in as liberal a spirit as possible for the mutual benefit of all.

The director of the library adds:

We have recently agreed to lend some manuscripts pertaining to Massachusetts to the Massachusetts Historical Society for photostat reproduction. We shall probably borrow from them New York manuscripts for photostat reproduction here. I hope this is merely a beginning of an exchange of courtesies of this sort between libraries. Personally I believe, as Mr. Worthington O. Ford does, that the photostat process has made the facsimile reproduction of manuscripts so cheap and easy that there is no reason why such interchanges as I have mentioned should not be made.

That there is perhaps another side to the question has already been suggested by Mr. Gaillard Hunt, of the Library of Congress, or perhaps it would be more exact to say that there is a possibility of an institution's generosity being imposed upon. The librarian of the John Crerar Library of Chicago enlarges upon the same point:

Loans for use outside the library are in a very different position from access within it. Here I see many objections to a too generous policy. This might result in a library being called upon unnecessarily and even unfairly. One eastern university has complained that another gives a course in a special field or on a special era and then meets the needs of its students for material by wholesale borrowing from its neighbors.

A few words will suffice as to the experience in Europe. Prof. William I. Hull, writing on the "Lessons of the Dutch Archives,"¹ says:

National and local, public and private cooperation is illustrated in many ways. For example, the national archivist has recently secured 318 marine maps in manuscript for the splendid collection of maps in the library of the University of Leiden. He has also supplied to Dutch colonists in Surinam and elsewhere copies of archives in which they were specially interested; he has mediated between various towns and brought about mutually advantageous exchanges of documentary materials; his specialists have deciphered the most difficult manuscripts, restored and mounted those most abused, and catalogued the most important new discoveries in the possession of province or town.

Dr. Amandus Johnson has this to say of the Swedish archives:²

Records are loaned to libraries and other archives all over the Kingdom. If an investigator finds it more convenient to work in the Royal Library, or any other library, he can get the particular documents he needs for his investigation brought to his desk without charge from the Royal Archives or from any library or archives in the country by applying to the officer at the head of the manuscript department in the institution in which he works. In this manner documents are even sent to foreign countries. The convenience of this system is evident.

Dr. Johnson is at the same time evidently conscious that such liberality is not entirely without its disadvantages, for he adds somewhat ruefully in a footnote:

In the spring of 1900, when the writer was completing his investigations in Sweden on the History of New Sweden, he desired to reexamine certain Usellinx letters, but the letters were at Utrecht to be copied.

The next point is as to restrictions on account of publication. Dr. John W. Jordan writes:

Since I have become librarian of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania there is but one set of papers withheld from the public—that is, the Wayne papers—and this is because the society intends to print them.

The librarian of Harvard University says:

Perhaps the only restriction on the use of historical documents should be when the society intends to print documents in extenso itself. Even then I see no objection to having copies or photographs made for other societies, with the provision that the papers should not be printed as a whole.

Mr. M. M. Quaife, of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, writes:

The one restriction which I am disposed to make upon the use, by students and other institutions, of our manuscripts is this: Our own society has a research and publication bureau, and in connection therewith has plans, of course, for future work. I am disposed to reserve, therefore, for publication by ourselves such manuscripts as we have formulated plans for bringing out in the near future. I think there is a clear and just distinction between this

¹ American Historical Association, Ann. Rept., 1900, 252.

² *Ibid.*, 267.

reservation and the policy pursued by some institutions of monopolizing historical material which may have come into their possession, but which they are either unable or undesirous to publish.

The State librarian of Pennsylvania, Mr. T. L. Montgomery, writes:

I should think it perfectly right to withhold material that was in the process of publication.

Mr. Montgomery raises another point worth considering:

I have had to deal [he says] with a great many historians, in the limited sense of the term, who delighted in holding material until some publication had come out, in order to prove how radically wrong the other was. This kind of parasite sometimes obtains a position in a public office. Death and infection are accomplishing a great deal of good in this direction, but some of them seem to have lived on preservatives.

Another point is suggested by Mr. F. K. W. Drury, of the library of the University of Illinois, as to restriction on material owned by a society or university upon which its own researches are being carried on. Is temporary restriction justifiable in such a case? The story is told of a certain professor of American history who was refused access to a famous collection in another university relating to his subject that, as the only way out of the difficulty, he finally joined the faculty of the offending institution. That does seem rather a desperate remedy.

It is also related of an institution not so very far from Chicago that it would only consent to the use of certain indispensable material in its possession on condition that the historian should submit to having his book brought out under their control. In another case an investigator asked permission to make photostat copies of certain copies of documents the originals of which had apparently been lost. No answer was ever made to his request.

While we are talking scandal one or two other instances may as well be given. A certain eastern authority was asked to go to a western institution to report upon a very valuable collection of manuscripts. He did so, and it is understood that his report was a factor of some importance in the acquisition of the material. Later he sent one of his assistants to look up certain points in the collection. The assistant was allowed to see but a small portion of the material and was refused permission to copy anything whatever. The institution had adopted the policy of refusing to all students the use of this material because there was a possibility that at some future time it might wish to publish some portion of it.

Another anecdote; this time at the expense of an eastern institution. The victim relates that he visited a certain city on the Atlantic seaboard to consult a newly discovered historical journal in which he was deeply interested. He found it in a well-known

library. The custodian of the manuscript courteously consented to let him see it, had it brought to his own desk, pulled out the sliding shelf, placed the manuscript thereon, and permitted the expert to turn over the pages while he kept a watchful eye on man and manuscript.

One more story, lest it be supposed that this sort of thing is peculiar to America. The Dominion archivist was very anxious a few years ago to obtain copies of certain documents relating to the early history of Canada in the French department of foreign affairs. He went to Paris and after being politely referred to one official after another and wasting several days, finally gave up the attempt and returned home. Some weeks later a permit arrived in Ottawa conveying the necessary permission to the archivist to make the copies. He joyfully sent it over to a trusted copyist in Paris. The latter took it to the department of foreign affairs and presented it to the official in charge of the documents. "But, monsieur," said the latter, "this permit is in the name of the archivist. It is impossible that the documents should be copied by another."

The question of restricting the use of documents dated before a certain year is a difficult one, and one as to which there is a considerable difference of opinion. It involves, among other things, in the case of public documents the policy of governmental departments, and in the case of private documents restrictions imposed by the donor.

Prof. Charles M. Andrews, writing of the British archives,¹ draws a lesson for American archivists from the restrictions placed for half a century by departmental authorities upon the Public Record Office. Records were turned over to the Record Office, but official red tape placed arbitrary limits upon their use by the public. "Such dates as 1759, 1779, 1780, etc., have in the past marked the limit beyond which the searcher could not go, except by personal application to the individual department." In 1909, as the result of the recommendations of an interdepartmental committee, the restrictions were removed and the documents submitted to regulations framed by the custodians of the Public Record Office. Mr. Fitzpatrick, of the Library of Congress, emphasizes the importance of Government documents being transferred to the archive bureau only when they are officially dead.

Control over such papers [he adds] is undesirable, for there can be no right nor claim of historical investigator, not legitimately overridden by administrative need; and, where this need continues to exist, its interference would result in practically transforming the archive bureau into an adjunct of the department from which the files came.²

¹ American Historical Association, Ann. Rep., 1909, 350.

² Notes on the Care, etc., of Manuscripts, 2.

Is it possible or desirable to fix a uniform date for the transfer of Government documents? European practice in this regard is becoming more generous. It is said that the French ministry of foreign affairs permits the use of its archives to February, 1848, and the Archives Nationales communicate documents that are 50 years old. The Public Record Office in London has fixed the year 1840 as its limit. In the Dominion archives at Ottawa documents are available down to the year of confederation, 1867. Various other dates obtain in different countries, depending upon historical and other considerations. Of course, in nearly all cases serious students with suitable credentials can obtain access to documents of a later date if they possess the necessary patience and perseverance to press the matter through the proper channels.

As to a fixed date, one finds a considerable difference of opinion even among competent authorities. Mr. Leland, for instance, says¹ that—

while a chronological dead line is convenient, especially for the archivist, it may be questioned if it is not better to decide each case upon its own merits. It is clear that certain kinds of material can safely be communicated to within very recent times. Why, then, should they be withheld because other material can not be communicated?

Prof. W. L. Grant, of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, suggests the adoption of a definite date of, say, 75 years from the present, documents of later date to be available under suitable restrictions. Prof. C. R. Fish, speaking of the Italian archives,² brings up another point. He urges the desirability of a uniform date being agreed upon for the transfer of documents from the various departments to the archive authorities.

The question of subjecting investigators to oversight, requiring them to submit their notes to an attendant, etc., is one that is viewed from widely different angles by archivists. Mr. Fitzpatrick, who voices no doubt the policy of the Library of Congress, says:³

Consultation of manuscripts should be allowed only in the presence and under the constant observation of the archivist or his assistants.

He takes the view also that in the case of confidential documents subject to restrictions the archivist must see the notes or copies made therefrom by the investigator; that application for use of a document should be made in writing; and that the application should state the purpose of the investigation.

On the other hand, Prof. W. R. Shepard, writing of the Spanish archives,⁴ says:

But the greatest boon of all to the worker in the Spanish archives is the total absence of censorship. Either a manuscript is supplied along with an absolute

¹ American Historical Association, Ann. Rep., 1909, 247.

² Ibid., 255.

³ Notes on the Care, etc., of Manuscripts, 5.

⁴ American Historical Association, Ann. Rep., 1909, 263.

right of copying or of photographing its contents, or it is simply withheld from the outset. Never is the vexatious experience undergone of having some choice passage blue-pancled and the labor of the copyist expended in vain because of some petty regulation devoid of sense or reason.

The views and practice of a number of representative archivists and librarians on this continent may be briefly summarized:

Mr. E. R. Harlan, of the Historical Department of Iowa:

Taking reasonable care that each applicant is one worthy of confidence, no restrictions are placed upon his use of the materials so long as they are not removed from the room in which they are examined.

Mr. Hanson, of the library of the University of Chicago:

I have seen so much carelessness and ignorance of the simplest safeguards, even on the part of prominent professors, that I am convinced of the necessity of strict supervision; at any rate, in the use of original manuscripts.

Mr. Langton, library of the University of Toronto:

If the reader or consulter lives in Toronto, we require him to use our material in the library building, and, in the case of particularly valuable material, in one of the rooms occupied by the staff, so that he may be under observation.

The New York State Library:

Places no restrictions upon the liberty of students consulting manuscripts except that necessary for the proper preservation and guarding of such manuscripts.

Connecticut State Library:

We have insisted that the manuscripts be used in the immediate presence of assistants.

Mr. Belden, of the Massachusetts State Library:

The only restriction is that the volumes or manuscripts should be used under proper supervision by one of the members of the library staff, and that in case the volume or manuscript is brittle or torn because of age that the library assistant should handle the same.

Mr. Carlton, of the Newberry Library:

Manuscripts and other rare material should be consulted and used only under the direct supervision of the regular custodian of the room or department, who is, or should be, an expert.

Dr. Owen, of the Department of Archives and History of Alabama:

The State archives are open to the public without restriction other than their use in conformity to the usual office regulations as to examination in the presence of an attendant, etc.

Mr. Robinson, of the Department of History of South Dakota:

No restriction whatever has been placed upon the use of our material by students, except that ordinary prudence which protects rare matter from injury or loss.

Mr. Brigham, of the Iowa State Library:

My reluctant judgment, drawn from experience with students, is that one cannot safely turn them loose among books or papers of value, for I have known not a few who seem to be lacking in conscientiousness in the matter of autograph-collecting or print-collecting who apparently are otherwise honest. It would seem to me best to supervise a student's examination of papers and make a note of papers turned over to him.

Dr. G. H. Locke, of the Toronto Public Library:

I should certainly put restrictions upon the liberty of students consulting manuscripts. My experience has led me to believe that about one in seven of such investigators really knows a little about tackling such a job as a collection of manuscripts. The rest wear out the material and gain nothing.

A few words as to credentials, age limit, hours for work, implements, and other facilities. The rule as to credentials of the New York Public Library, manuscript division, is as follows:

Persons desiring a card of admission to the manuscript division should make a written application to the Director of the library, specifying name, address, profession, or occupation, and the purpose for which admission is desired. Such application should be made, if possible, at least two days in advance, and must be accompanied by a written recommendation from some person of known position.

In the British Museum an applicant must be vouched for by a property holder. The Library of Congress requires a written application, and favors, though it does not apparently demand, a letter of introduction. Yale University and several other institutions require identification. The Dominion Archives and many other similar bodies demand nothing in the way of credentials. In the European archives an introduction is generally necessary; if a foreigner, from the diplomatic representative of his country.

As to an age limit, the rules of the manuscript division of the New York Public Library provide that "no person under 18 years of age will be admitted to the manuscript research room." In most institutions the matter is left to the judgment of the custodian.

The general rule as to hours for research work seems to be that students have access to material whenever the institution is open to the public. In the Dominion Archives a research worker may obtain access to his material after the regular hours. On the other hand, the Newberry Library closes its manuscript and rare book department at 5 p. m., the librarian taking the view that such valuable material should not be consulted except under the supervision of experts.

The use of pen and ink in copying manuscripts has generally been nought objectionable. Mr. Fitzpatrick, speaking of the proper use of such material,¹ says:

It must not be touched with either pen or pencil point, and copying should be with pencil if possible, as the open, dripping inkwell is a constant menace to the document. The fountain pen is only less objectionable. With some well-meaning but awkward individuals, however, the pencil for copying or making notes is all that can safely be permitted.

The rule of the New York Public Library is that, except in very special cases, pencils must be used in copying or taking notes.

¹ Notes on the Care, etc., of Manuscripts, 5.

In the Swedish archives there is no restriction in the use of ink, the only rule being that the student must not rest his notes on the documents while making excerpts.

This brings us down to the question of the photostat. A good deal has already been said as to the manifest advantages of cooperation in the exchange of copies of manuscripts by archive bureaus and libraries. A word or two may be added as to the value of the photostat in this connection, and for other purposes. The photostat supplies an unquestionable duplicate of the original manuscript, infinitely preferable to the work of even the most painstaking copyist. Think for a moment what the world has lost in the destruction of great collections of manuscripts, even in modern times,¹ and how incalculably richer we would have been had photographic copies of these documents been supplied to other institutions.

Mr. Paltsits, speaking of the "Tragedies in New York's Public Records,"² says:

The lost records give rise to serious reflections in us. There are cases in which we must depend wholly upon some printed or contemporary or later transcript, the accuracy of which can no longer be ascertained with certainty, because the original is either lost, mutilated, or decayed from neglect. Too often the key of truth has perished, leaving us only the uncertain premises that are afforded by incompleteness.

Cases will occur to each one of us, within our own experience, of incomplete stories, missing links in a chain of historical facts, due to the loss of one or more indispensable documents. How we would have blessed the man, or his memory, who could have been far-sighted enough to deposit authentic copies of these manuscripts in some other institution before his own went up in smoke.

Nor, finally, is the value of the photostat confined to its use in providing an absolutely correct and trustworthy copy of original manuscripts. As Mr. Leland points out in his article on the "Application of Photography to Archive and Historical Work"³

It is also of service in the restoration of partially destroyed documents or when it is desired to ascertain the original wording of documents that have been modified by erasures. The artificial lens is so much more powerful than that of the eye, and the photographic plate is to such a degree more sensitive than the retina, that much that is invisible, or at best quite illegible to the vision even when aided by a glass, is easily made out in the photographic copy.

The photostat furnishes also the means of preserving facsimiles of documents that have begun to disintegrate.

¹ See Chronological Sketch of the Destruction of Libraries by Fire in Ancient and Modern Times, in Report of Library Association of the United Kingdom, 1879, 140-154; and article by R. B. Poole on the same subject in Report of U. S. Commissioner of Education, 1892-93, pt. 2, 724-726.

² American Historical Association, Ann. Rep., 1900, 373.

³ American Historical Association, Ann. Rep., 1908, I, 184.

One word more, as the preacher saith, and I have done. Mr. Hanson, of the library of the University of Chicago, contributes the interesting suggestion that, as all students do not fully realize the importance of preserving original documents or appreciate their duty to coming generations, it might be a safe rule to place before them photostat copies instead of the originals, at any rate in the case of peculiarly valuable manuscripts. "I rather think," he adds, "that we may have to come to this more and more, not only in the use of manuscripts by students but in their exhibition or display."

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